

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEDAN 0141

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ID

SUBJ: PROGNOSIS FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NORTHERN SUMATRA

REF: LEHN/KILPATRICK TELECON, 4/27/77

1. GENERAL ATMOSPHERE REMAINS RELATIVELY CALM. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THERE HAVE BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS OTHER THAN THOSE ALREADY REPORTED. WE HAVE HEARD RUMORS OF OTHER INCIDENTS BUT HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE ANY OF THEM. CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY EXTENSIVE INTIMIDATION OF POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORTERS BY BOTH GOLKAR FUNCTIONARIES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS. POLITICAL PARTY CAMPAIGNERS HAVE NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO ENTER EITHER GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL ESTATES FOR CAMPAIGNING WHILE GOLKAR HAS HAD FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN THOSE AREAS. IF THIS GAMBIT SUCCEEDS, IT WILL PRESENT GOLKAR WITH A SIGNIFICANT BLOC OF VOTES, I.E., THE ESTATES WORKERS, PARTICULARLY IN NORTH SUMATRA AND TO A LESSER DEGREE IN ACEH, JAMBI AND RIAU. THE PRESS HAS BEEN RIGIDLY CONTROLLED; AND ON OFFICIAL ORDER, GOLKAR RALLIES HAVE BEEN REPORTED AS BEING HEAVILY ATTENDED WHEN IN FACT MANY HAVE NOT BEEN. RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY OFFICIALS HAVE EVEN ORDERED THAT REPORTING ON THE INDIAN ELECTIONS AND THE AFTERMATH OF THE ELECTIONS IN PAKISTAN BE STRICTLY LIMITED. THE CAMPAIGN HAS SEEN A STEADY FLOW
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OF SENIOR GOI OFFICIALS CAMPAIGNING FOR GOLKAR. EVERY CONCEIVABLE OCCASION HAS BEEN USED BY THEM TO VISIT AND PLUG FOR GOLKAR. THESE EFFORTS HAVE NOT ALL BEEN SUCCESSFUL: AMIR MURTONO HAS GONE TO ACEH FOUR TIMES IN THE PAST MONTH TO TRY TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE DONE BY THE ABORTED ATTEMPT OF ADAM MALIK TO MEET DAUD BUREUEH.

2. IN SPITE OF THESE PRODIGIOUS EFFORTS BY THE GOI AND GOLKAR, AND

PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THEM IN SOME CASES, OUR PRE-ELECTION FORECAST IS SOMEWHAT LESS OPTIMISTIC FOR A RESOUNDING GOLKAR VICTORY THAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CAMPAIGN. WHILE WE STILL BELIEVE GOLKAR WILL WIN, WE NOW THINK THEIR PERCENTAGE OF THE VOTE WILL DROP BY A FEW POINTS IN NORTH SUMATRA, ACEH, RIAU, AND WEST SUMATRA FROM THE LEVELS REACHED IN THE 1971 GENERAL ELECTION. THE VOTE FOR PPP WILL PROBABLY BE GREATER THAN IN 1971 (FOR THE MOSLEM PARTIES) BY ROUGHLY THE AMOUNT OF GOLKAR'S LOSSES. WE EXPECT NO SIGNIFICANT GAINS OR LOSSES FOR PDI.

3. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THERE WILL BE ANY MAJOR VIOLENCE BEFORE OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ELECTION THAT MIGHT CAUSE CONCERN FOR AMERICANS OR OTHER FOREIGNERS IN THIS AREA. THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS, HOWEVER, THAT LOCAL CHINESE ARE INDIVIDUALLY TRYING TO PREPARE FOR ANY EVENTUALITY ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO SIGN THAT THIS IS BEING DONE IN ANY ORGANIZED WAY. POLICE AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN ALL NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS AGAINST AN OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MOST OF THOSE IN THIS AREA INVOLVED IN THE KOMMANDO JIHAD HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AS HAVE SOME OF THE MORE MILITANT MOSLEM PREACHERS AND SUSPECTED ADHERENTS OF THE OUTLAWED DARUL ISLAM MOVEMENT. IN THE LONGER RUN, HOWEVER, ALIENATED MEMBERS OF THESE AND OTHER GROUPS COULD REACT VIOLENTLY TO ANY INDICATIONS THE ELECTIONS WERE RIGGED OR TO ANY SIGN THAT THE GOI IS LOSING ITS ABILITY TO CONTROL THE SITUATION.
KILPATRICK

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